

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 22 without prejudice.

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1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

requesting, with a local device, configuration services from a remote device coupled to the network in response to connecting the local device to the network;

providing configuration services, with the local device, to one or more remote devices of said network if the response to said configuration information request is not received by the local device from said remote device within a predetermined period of time;

providing configuration services, with the local device, to one or more remote devices of said network if said local device has a higher priority than said remote device; and

receiving configuration services from said remote device with ~~operating~~ the local device as a client device ~~to said remote device~~ if said remote device has a higher priority than said local device.

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2. (Currently Amended) The method defined in claim 1, wherein said

providing configuration services with the local device comprises:

determining a first network address;

assigning a second network address;

assigning a network name;

correlating said first network address, said second network address, and said

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network name; and

recording said correlated first network address, said correlated second network address and said correlated network name in a table.

3. (Original) The method defined in claim 2, wherein said first network address comprises a media access control (MAC) address.
4. (Original) The method defined in claim 2, wherein said second network address comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) address.
5. (Original) The method defined in claim 2, wherein assigning said network name comprises:
 - detecting a network name conflict;
 - resolving said network name conflict; and
 - recording a code in said table to indicate said network name conflict.
6. (Previously Amended) The method defined in claim 2, wherein said network name is suggested by said local device.
7. (Previously Amended) The method defined in claim 1, wherein said predetermined period of time is varied.

8-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

~~assigning an address to a local device on said network;~~

~~assigning a network name to said local device;~~

~~supplying user and group information across said network; and~~

determining service capability of said local device including whether said local device is capable of providing configuration services to one or more remote devices of said network;

providing configuration services to one or more devices from the local device of said network if configuration services are not provided by a network device having a higher priority than said local device; and

operating the client device as a client device to receive configuration services from a remote device if said remote device has a higher priority than said local device.

13. (Previously Amended) The method defined in claim 12, wherein

supplying user and group information comprises:

detecting when said local device is connected to said network;

sending a first user and group list to said local device in response to said local device connecting to said network;

said local device comparing said first user and group list with a second user and group list resident on said local device; and

said local device determining whether said first user and group list or said second user and group list is more recent;

receiving a more recent user and group list from said local device;
updating said user and group information to reflect said more recent user and group list; and
propagating said updated user and group information throughout said network.

14. (Original) The method defined in claim 13, wherein a time-stamp is used to determine whether said first user and group list or said second user and group list is more recent.

15. (Original) The method defined in claim 13, wherein updating said user and group information comprises recording said more recent user and group list in clear text.

16. (Original) The method defined in claim 15, wherein updating said user and group information comprises encrypting said user and group information prior to transmission across said network.

17. (Original) The method defined in claim 12, further comprising:
correlating said network address and said network name; and
storing said correlated network address and said correlated network name in a table.

18. (Previously Amended) The method defined claim 12, wherein said network name is suggested by said local device.

19. (Original) The method defined in claim 12, wherein HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP) is used to exchange information.

20. (Original) The method defined in claim 12, wherein Service Location Protocol (SLP) is used to exchange information.

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21. (Currently Amended) A ~~network comprising:~~
— a first device coupled to said network, said first device configured to:
— request a first network address;
receive a first network address from a second device coupled to said network;
provide a network configuration services if said first network address is not received from said second device;
determine its priority level on said network if said first network address is received from said second device;
provide said network configuration services if said priority level is higher than a second priority level of said second device; and
operate as a client device to receive configuration services from said remote device if said remote device has a higher priority than said device.

22. (Canceled)

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23. (Currently Amended) The network device defined in claim 21, wherein
the first device is further configured to automatically:

- assign a second network address;
- assign a network name;
- correlate said second network address with said network name; and
- record said correlated second network address and said correlated network name

in a table.

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24. (Currently Amended) The network device defined in claim 23, wherein
said table further comprises:

- a Media Access Control (MAC) address; and
- a code to indicate a conflict with said network name.

25. (Currently Amended) The network device defined in claim 23, wherein
said first and second network addresses comprise Internet Protocol (IP) addresses.

26. (Previously Amended) A network comprising:

- a first device configured to
 - assign an address to a second device on said network;
 - assign a network name to said second device on said network;
 - supply user and group information across said network; and

determine service capability of said second device on said network,
wherein if said first device is capable of providing configuration services to said
network;

provide configuration services to one or more devices of said network if
configuration services are not provided by a network device having a higher
priority than said device; and

operate as a client device to receive configuration services from said
remote device if said remote device has a higher priority than said device.

27. (Currently Amended) The network defined in claim 26, wherein said user
and group information comprises:

a list comprising

a user name;

a password;

a group name having a second list of members allowed access to said group;

a time stamp; and

a character encoding code.

28. (Original) The network defined in claim 27, wherein said password is
recorded in clear text.

29-30. (Canceled)

31. (Original) An apparatus comprising:

means for requesting, with a local device, configuration services from a remote device coupled to the network in response to connecting the local device to the network;

means for providing configuration services to one or more remote devices of said network if the response to said configuration information request is not received by the local device from said remote device within a predetermined period of time;

means for providing configuration services to one or more remote devices of said network if said local device has a higher priority than said remote device; and

means for operating the local device as a client device to said remote device if said remote device has a higher priority than said local device.

32. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 31, wherein said means for providing configuration services comprises:

means for determining a first network address;

means for assigning a second network address;

means for assigning a network name;

means for correlating said first network address, said second network address, and said network name; and

means for recording said correlated first network address, said correlated second network address and said correlated network name in a table.

33. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 32, wherein said first network address comprises a media access control (MAC) address.

34. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 32, wherein said second network address comprises an Internet Protocol (IP) address.

35. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 32, wherein the means for assigning said network name comprises:

means for detecting a network name conflict;

means for resolving said network name conflict; and

means for recording a code in said table to indicate said network name conflict.

36. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 32, wherein said network name is suggested by said local device.

37. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 31, wherein said predetermined period of time is varied.

38. (Original) An apparatus comprising:

means for assigning an address to a local device on said network;

means for assigning a network name to said local device;

means for supplying user and group information across said network; and

means for determining service capability of said local device including whether said local device is capable of providing configuration services to one or more remote devices of said network;

means for providing configuration services to one or more devices of said network if configuration services are not provided by a network device having a higher priority than said local device; and

means for operating as a client device to receive configuration services from a remote device if said remote device has a higher priority than said local device.

39. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 38, wherein the means for supplying user and group information comprises:

means for detecting when said local device is connected to said network;

means for sending a first user and group list to said local device in response to said local device connecting to said network;

means for said local device comparing said first user and group list with a second user and group list resident on said local device; and

means for said local device determining whether said first user and group list or said second user and group list is more recent;

means for receiving a more recent user and group list from said local device;

means for updating said user and group information to reflect said more recent user and group list; and

means for propagating said updated user and group information throughout said network.

40. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 39, wherein a time-stamp is used to determine whether said first user and group list or said second user and group list is more recent.

41. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 39, wherein means for updating said user and group information comprises means for recording said more recent user and group list in clear text.

42. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 41, wherein means for updating said user and group information comprises means for encrypting said user and group information prior to transmission across said network.

43. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 38, further comprising:
means for correlating said network address and said network name; and
means for storing said correlated network address and said correlated network name in a table.

44. (Original) The apparatus defined claim 38, wherein said network name is suggested by said local device.

45. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 38, wherein HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP) is used to exchange information.

46. (Original) The apparatus defined in claim 38, wherein Service Location Protocol (SLP) is used to exchange information.